

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO AMEMBASSY LIMA

SECSTATE WASHDC 2345

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

S E C R E T CARACAS 2856

E.O. 11652: XGDS - 3

TAGS: ECIN, ETRD, VE

SUBJECT: ANDEAN PACT - VENEZUELAN JUNTA MEMBER

REF: LIMA 2207; CARACAS 0720

1. LIMA REFTEL CONFIRMS EMB REFTEL REPORT THAT JESUS ALBERTO FERNANDEZ, CURRENTLY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF VENEZUELA INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN TRADE (ICE) WOULD BE ELECTED TO ANDEAN PACT JUNTA. THERE FOLLOWS BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON FERNANDEZ WHO IS NO. 2 MAN OF THE INSTITUTE UNDER ICE PRESIDENT REINALDO FIGUEREDO FIGUEREDO.

2. FERNANDEZ, WHO IS OF MEDIUM HEAVY BUILD, HAS SHORT CROPPED HAR AND SPORTS BEARD AND MUSTACHE, WAS BORN MAY 18, 1938. HIS WIFE IS MARIA MERCEDES LECUNA, KNOWN AS "LA CHINA". HER UNCLE IS VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR TO CHINA, SANCHEZ CARRERA.

3. JESUS FERNANDEZ IS THE BROTHER OF EDUARDO FERNANDEZ, A PROMINENT LEADER OF THE SECOND LARGEST

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POLITICAL PARTY COPEI.

4. FERNANDEZ HAS BEEN A DRIVING FORCE WITHIN THE ICE RESULTING IN ITS BECOMING A POWERFUL VOICE WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. HE SPEAKS ENGLISH AND FRENCH FLUENTLY AND HAS MADE NUMEROUS TRIP TO GENEVA TO REPRESENT VENEZUELA IN GATT, ALTHOUGH VENEZUELA IS NOT A MEMBER OF THAT ORGANIZATION. FERNANDEZ HAS BEEN AMONG THE ICE OFFICIALS WHO HAVE ADVOCATED THAT TRADE SHOULD BE USED FOR POLITICAL GAIN. HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO ASSUME THAT POSTURE IN HIS NEW POSITION WITHIN THE ANDEAN PACT JUNTA.

5. FERNANDEZ IS KNOWN AS PRO-CUBAN AND IS REPORTED TO HAVE USED HIS POSITION TO PROMOTE CONNECTIONS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, BETWEEN VENEZUELA AND CUBA. HE IS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN NEGOTIATING THE RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN CUBA AND VENEZUELA. ONCE THESE RELATIONS WERE ESTABLISHED, A HIGHLY PLACED OFFICIAL OF ICE, MIGUEL DOMINGUEZ-CHAIN, WAS ASSIGNED AS DCM TO HAVANA.

6. FERNANDEZ'S CONNECTION WITH THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT IS SO WIDELY KNOWN THAT HE HAS BEEN REFERRED TO AS THE UNOFFICIAL AMBASSADOR TO CUBA. HE DOES LITTLE TO HIDE THIS CONNECTION. DURING THE VISIT OF STR WILLIAM EBERLE TO CARACAS IN 1974 TO EXPLAIN TO THE GOV THE U.S. TRADE ACT OF 1974, FERNANDEZ HOSTED THE MEETING IN THE ICE CONFERENCE ROOM IN WHICH HE HAD PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED A LIFE SIZE PICTURE OF FIDEL CASTRO. SHLAUDEMANN

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